



Lesson Planning: Putting it All Together

Why go this route?

- Because teaching really IS an art that requires creative, on-the-spot judgment about how all the elements come together.
- Because disciplined choices lend themselves to reflective improvement.
- Because all the preparation of knowing yourself, knowing your students, knowing your goals, knowing your instructional options and organizing your resource needs leads to concrete decisions about what to do in the classroom.

You'll know you've arrived when...

- Teachers share a standard format for making lesson plans, so they can quickly understand and dialogue about each others' choices.
- Teachers understand why each element in their lesson planning format is important, and can choose flexibly which elements help with a given learning objective and which ones should be omitted.
- Administrators understand the elements teachers are balancing and managing in a given lesson and can support teachers in lesson design and delivery decisions.

Construction Zone

- This is the fifth (of six) packets in a full instructional design & delivery cycle outlined in MI-Map. See Packets 5:1 to 5:6 for the others.



- This packet treats teaching as an “art-form” in which the artist orchestrates learning by tailoring design decisions about classroom activities, based on all the preparation done in the previous five steps.



It's about TIME

- Time will vary depending on a teacher's experience with his/her class and with this planning process. Estimates range from 1-2 hours for a full plan that may take multiple days to execute.




Potential COSTS

- No additional costs

The Process

A step-by-step guide to developing solid lesson-plans.

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

This framework for lesson planning is adapted from the work of Robert Gagne. For a deeper understanding of these “Instructional Events,” refer to the Resource section on page 4 of this MI-Map packet to find his book, Conditions of Learning. INSERT A is a blank template for planning these nine “instructional events.” INSERT B is an illustrative sample lesson developed in by Michigan Partner Educator Gail Sharpe.

- 1 Identify your learning goals.** Include standards from the Michigan Curriculum Framework, and/or your Grade-Level Content Expectations.

See MI-Map Packet 6:2 for help if you're not used to doing this. Post or otherwise identify these prominently for students. Many researchers and learning theorists agree that it helps if learners know where they're headed.
- 2 Develop a performance task** that will demonstrate whether the learning has taken place.

Getting specific FIRST about how you will know whether the learning goal has been met does two things—it cues learners about what they need to do to succeed, and it helps focus and structure the teacher's other choices toward that end. Accompany the task with a rubric that specifies how successful work will be judged. MI-Map Packet 6:2 has a sample.
- 3 Decide how you'll gain learners' attention.** Sometimes called the “set” or “hook” after Madeline Hunter's language, this helps students connect the learning to their experience and interest.

A puzzle or challenge that can't be solved without new information is often a good starter. Look for something that connects to students' prior experiences (to encourage retention and transfer) and that actively involves the students.
- 4 Decide what “stimulus”** will offer new information to the learner.

This involves choosing the instructional method by which you'll offer new information to the learner. MI-Map Packet 5:4 “*Knowing Your Options—Instructional Strategies*” offers a starter set of methods you might not be familiar with. Try a new one, or settle into a familiar strategy. Then name and organize the content you'll introduce with that methodology.
- 5 Choose how you'll guide learning.**

Offering accurate, unambiguous, non-controversial “models” of the skill or knowledge being learned...introducing complications or variations in a deliberate way...checking for understanding...these are all ways to guide a student's interaction with new information.
- 6 Elicit a performance** by the learner.

Ask the learner to use or apply or work with the new information in some way. This differs from the guided learning in that students work independently, once the teacher is satisfied that they understand the content and the task.
- 7 Give immediate feedback.**

Choose a method for letting the student know when (s)he's succeeded, and when she/he has not. This reinforces successful learning and prompts repeated efforts where needed.
- 8 Assess the learning.**

The performance task developed in #2 is now used to demonstrate new competence and mastery. Use the rubric to score the performance, and record student achievement in your standards-tracking matrix. (MI-Map Packet 5:3 “*Knowing Your Goals—Standards and Expectations*” shows you how to set one up if you haven't used one before.)
- 9 Encourage retention and transfer** by helping students generalize their new learning and see where else it might be useful.

Getting more mileage from putting it all together in Lesson Plans

How documenting teaching decisions in a standard lesson plan format benefits your school in regard to the following initiatives:

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

- This legislation places new accountability on educators for finding ways to increase student achievement steadily. Improvement requires changes in instructional practice, and the first step in this change is documenting what we're doing now. As we document new strategies, we can track which strategies are effective and which ones to avoid. Disciplined lesson plans are the first step in documenting instructional practices. Lesson plans allow building administrators to better supervise their buildings, more effectively plan for staff development, and assure achievement by all students.

Education YES!

- More than half of Michigan's school report card depends on increased student achievement. The only part of student achievement that educators control (and can change) is instructional practice. Becoming more disciplined about the format in which we make teaching choices will enable us to share experience and problem-solve together.



Resources

Books

The Conditions of Learning and Theory of Instruction, Robert Mills Gagne. International Thomson Publishing (1985).

We chose Gagne's nine "Instructional Events" as the framework for our template because they describe the learning process in plain English, and they are familiar to many common learning frameworks. This book has lots more about the research and theory underpinning them.

People

Specialists

Most Intermediate School Districts have a specialist working with schools on instructional design in their service areas.

Coaches

The *Alliance for Building Capacity in Schools* website lists coaches whose training has been provided by Michigan State University and supported by the Michigan Department of Education. Some are actively working with instructional design in Michigan schools. Please visit:

www.abcscoaches.org

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